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ABSTRACT

To develop communication skills among non-participating students, teachers must recognize, diagnose, and treat individual problems of the reticent child. Teachers need to convey the concept of an "open" classroom where all ideas are welcome, to develop questioning and "active listening," to encourage eye contact, to make use of small group discussions, to promote classroom discussion among students as well as between teacher and student, and to assume a supportive role. (A "model" plan for eight lessons, and bibliographies on creative dramatics and student-teacher interaction are included in this ESEA Title 3 report.) (JMC)

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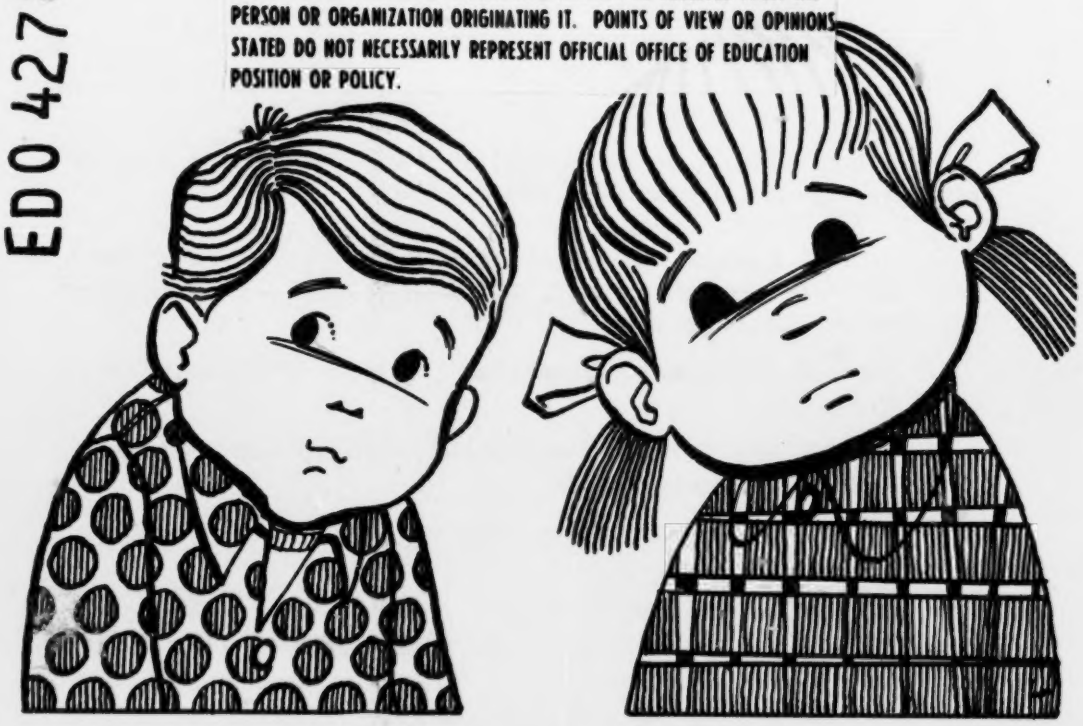

THE RETICENT CHILD IN THE CLASSROOM

ORAL COMMUNICATION CONCEPTS AND ACTIVITIES

A MANUAL FOR TEACHERS (K-12)

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PREFACE

It is our hope that the teachers reading this manual will become increasingly concerned with oral communication in their classrooms. They will see it as critical to successful learning. Second, hopefully, teachers will focus their concerns on the reticent, non-participating students in particular. Third, a brief summary of the theory underlying the diagnosis and treatment of speech reticence is involved. Fourth, a rational or plan of attack for dealing with problems of reticence is involved. Fifth, specific classroom strategies for developing students' communication skills are provided. And sixth, suggested ways of using these skills in teaching regular curriculum subject material are a basic concern.

"Once I drove cross country with three horses," said the Baal Shem, "a bay, a piebald, and a white horse. And not one of them could neigh. Then I met a peasant coming toward me and he called: 'Slacken the reins!' So I slackened the reins, and then all three horses began to neigh."

Martin Buber

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ORAL COMMUNICATION IN THE CLASSROOM

Most teachers are aware that in-school learning occurs essentially as teachers and students talk with each other. This activity, more than any other, characterizes what goes on in a classroom. It follows that there must be participation by both teacher and student for maximum learning.

Students who participate effectively in classroom speaking and listening will succeed in educational growth. The teacher who can't communicate his ideas, and the student who does not ask his questions or make his comments in class interaction are causing the education process to break down. In much the same way, in a world where people dealing with people is rapidly supplanting people dealing with tools as the predominant mode of operation, employment success is dependent upon one's ability to share ideas with others. A student's personal growth, through joining clubs and social organizations, through consulting with vocational and guidance counselors, through sharing plans for the future with his peers and elders, is equally facilitated in communication exchanges. In every aspect of life--educational, vocational, personal and social--oral communication plays a vital role.

A quick look back over the above examples of interpersonal communication reveals that the majority of the interactions described call for ability in speaking and listening, rather than writing and reading. Indeed, surveys of the ways in which various groups of people communicate in their daily lives have indicated that oral interaction consumes much more time than written interaction.

When we think of the most significant moments in our lives--the turning points--we frequently visualize moments in which we were speaking with other people.

How well do we perform this vital activity in our lives? Ask businessmen and they say that the ability to speak well is severely lacking in the people they interview. Ask psychologists and counselors and they say that most personal problems are caused by breakdowns in communication among individuals and the people who mean the most to them. Ask public figures and they deplore the voicelessness of many segments of our population and ask why more people don't speak up for what they believe in. Ask teachers and they can divide their classes into three groups--those who talk too much, those who talk too little, and those whose speaking is just about appropriate, with the smallest number of students often falling into the third group.

The problem to be dealt with here concerns those students whose speaking is inappropriate, particularly those deficient in this area. When a teacher structures an activity in which all students can potentially participate, such as a discussion with the class on a current event, he will usually engage only a limited percent of them in the oral exchange. Most teachers can name a handful of students in each of their classes, be they kindergarten or senior high, who almost never volunteer to speak in class. Unless given some special attention these students do not ask questions, make comments, suggest relationships, or speak in any relevant way on what they are to learn. In a recent survey conducted in Alameda County, 28 percent of the students were referred by at least one teacher as not participating in classroom discussion.

We further divide this group of non-participating students into two categories. One includes those who do not participate because they lack the necessary information or incentive. The other group of students has something to say--they want to join in the interaction, but they are held back by anxiety. When anxiety about the exposure which accompanies the speaking act overcomes the anticipation of rewards which can be gained from it, we say that <u>reticence</u> is occurring. Situations in classrooms often cause self-consciousness or anxiety. When this anxious feeling inhibits speech, reticence exists. The overt silence can be caused by a variety of inner forces, everything from sleepiness to a "children should be seen and not heard" upbringing, to a self-consciousness about a stuttering problem. Reticence is present whenever a student has something to say, wants to say it, but remains

silent nevertheless. The possible causes of this hesitation must be hypothesized anew in every situation. Is the student afraid of being mocked by his peers? Does he fear the teacher's wrath? Does he customarily devalue his own ideas? Does he view his own body or voice negatively? Are there always other, more verbal students speaking in this class? Does this classroom activity involve no opportunity for oral expression of ideas? Any of these reasons, another reason, or a combination of reasons can be possible causes of reticence. Research which pinpoints causes and cures of reticence has yet to be done.

Much more attention has been given to the noisy, disruptive student. Discipline is the main problem in classroom management for most teachers. Their concern is to conduct the class so that all children are given learning experiences and so that their authority or leadership is clearly the guiding force. With these goals it is not surprising that the students who challenge the teacher's authority and who speak to call attention to themselves, who are acting out inner needs, are the subject of intense concern.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

Discussion is a valuable tool to develop the intercommunication and the interaction of the minds in a group setting - whether it be a small or a large group. Many teachers are hesitant to capitalize on class discussion because they have been unsuccessful with it. But since effective teaching and problem solving involve the feelings and the "feedback" as well as intellect - it is important to examine some basic elements of a good discussion in order to use this tool successfully.

The CLASSROOM CLIMATE is the most important factor facilitating discussion. The teacher sets the tone for a classroom climate that promotes the acceptance of all ideas in an atmosphere which students feel free to take "risks" with their thinking. Students soon understand that they can build on the thinking of others and that their thoughts are IMPORTANT. "Climate" invites excitement and the broad involvement of everyone in the group. The most effective tool is the teacher - the model of a good listener and supporter to those contributing thoughts. Successful teachers have students examine the classroom "acceptance

climate" and set standards for listening and sharing that will make everyone feel comfortable about his thoughts. The teacher and students together make the classroom a comfortable place in which to talk and a general mood of acceptance permeates the classroom which is able to carry on productive discussions.

The Teacher's Support Role - One of the most important roles the teacher-leader plays is the SUPPORT role. If students give false data, or move in the wrong direction or move too fast for the average group, the teacher must manage the discussion. Children often are in error, or their thoughts are irrelevant. How do you "save their face" and preserve them all as active participants. Such supportive comments help children:

"You may change your mind, Jim."

"This is one idea, Jane - you may change later."

"Can anyone hitch to Bill's idea, perhaps with more facts?"

"Who can help Betty out? She's on the right track. We need more facts."

"You are on the right track, Jane."

"Did you hear what Paul said?"

The goal is to work for everyone's acceptance. The thoughts of isolates - no mater how bright - will have their ideas and leadership rejected by the group. Study the sociometric pattern of the class. Try to mix acceptance patterns to include everyone--then everyone's thoughts will be accepted. Strained relations reject the building blocks of thoughts. Children are not free to think if they have to constantly defend themselves.

STUDENTS PLAY ROLES - The delicate balance between teacher and student rests with the teacher's ability to place value on each child as he is. The teacher must openly display a faith in each child that enables the child to have faith in himself as a good thinker and in turn the child outwardly takes the risk of "role-taking." The clever teacher studies the class so that he can utilize the group to enhance the development of each child in the group.

The sensitive teacher will watch children individually to see the roles they can play and in turn use these roles as an asset to promote the group thinking process. There is no reason to keep roles a secret--through the use of

discussion tapes you can diagnose the ability of students to play constructive roles in discussion. In any discussion those involved are either giving or seeking and all are talking roles. They are either expressing leadership or seeking facts, stating reasons, or making generalizations, sometimes clarifying or giving support.

Analysis of discussions permits the examination of the dynamics of the individual and group roles.

Which students are the supporters, the protectors and encouragers? Who can initiate new ideas, illustrate facts, summarize ideas, build on others ideas? Who can generalize? (Don't call on him first - you leave the rest out!) STUDY HOW YOU CAN USE THESE STUDENTS TO FACILITATE DISCUSSION.

A teacher's job is to go sidewise to involve everyone. Encourage "chaining" (building thoughts on the thoughts of others). Train for clear thinking and reset focus when expanding ideas. Remember if students can't consciously formulate thoughts - they can't verbalize. You will immobilize half of the class if you go too fast. Too many discussions are cut off too soon and they don't go around enough for everyone to get on the bandwagon. Frequent discussions encourage students to be open and honest and operate on the <u>feeling level</u>.

Teachers can control discussion and in turn they control thought. They can flatten out discussions by skipping the "whats" and focusing on the "whys" - or by putting words into the child's mouth. If you want students to become less dependent on the adult leader then you must be careful not to move out too quickly. This reduces participation and the discussion becomes a dialogue between the adult and the most verbal students. Since children do not think in turns, teachers must plan for this.

Simple questions such as: "How do you think John felt?" or "Did anything like this ever happen to you?" will encourage the quiet, shy child to see himself and perhaps be more comfortable and want to participate.

SOME THOUGHTS:

1. Watch sentence length.
2. Encourage streams of thought "speaking to the point" - Hitching to the thoughts of others. Does the discussion go from teacher to child, back to teacher, or teacher to child to child?
3. Tabulate the discussion participation - shy students can do this for you and get involved or assign the task to the highly verbal child who robs discussion

from the reticent child who does not speak.

4. Code discussion tapes - analyze the teacher's role - analyze the students' roles - are they in balance? Who is carrying the ball?

5. When operating on the higher thought levels discussion may become a dialogue between teacher and a few verbal students. DO NOT cut off a chain of thoughts with a child operating on the higher conceptual levels, but try your hardest to keep everyone involved.

6. RECAP SESSIONS - Pull discussions together. Many times it is necessary for the teacher to recap the significant happenings during a discussion. Pulling the threads together ties the loose ends, and this makes it possible for children to arrive at generalizations and conclusions.

7. Meet in <u>small groups</u> to discuss - include the reticent child. Recap sessions following discussions provide the shy child a chance to react to the discussion without risk-taking. The teacher is able to demonstrate in this setting that the thoughts of <u>all</u> are important.

8. Use discussions to get acquainted with your students. Gather on the lawn - on the front steps - under a tree - sit and listen and enjoy the discussion chatter.

Quiet children often pass through school unnoticed and untended. In fact, their quietness is frequently encouraged and reinforced, both in school and out. When the child is quiet out of respect or desire, this is well and good. But, when the quiet is from a fear of speaking up, when the quiet is an habituated behavioral pattern which is often regretted, then the encouragement is misplaced. This child needs to be given experiences which enable him comfortably to contribute his ideas in communication with others. The concepts and activities which follow can be used to alleviate--to a great degree--reticence in the classroom. It is the editors' hope that the ideas suggested in this manual for students in grades Kindergarten through 12, will be tried and continually revised in the light of success with all students, but particularly the shy, quiet ones.

CONCEPT #1

OPPORTUNITIES SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR EVERYONE TO PARTICIPATE ORALLY.

Talking about any topic is useful in learning about it. Questions must be raised and answered; confusing aspects must be cleared up; comments can be shared; and relationships to other topics can be made clear.

Clearly and consistently showing each student that you want to hear from him makes him confident that you are interested in sharing his thoughts. His confidence in the worth of his own ideas is built up when you show your interest in hearing them.

A minimum of time should pass between your raising an issue or explaining an idea and hearing the students' comments on it. Students should be given immediate opportunity to respond to what is being taught. Lessons should be planned with this interaction included.

Genuine oral participation encourages bonds of trust and friendship in the classroom.

Listening with interest to everything students have to say and encouraging the class to do likewise helps students to become more at ease and to be more willing to share thoughts.

In order for students to express their thoughts, effort should be made to build the confidence which students lack in themselves and others.

When personal relations among the students and the teacher are established, learning is more likely to take place.

ACTIVITY 1.1

Children are paired off. They are asked to sit back-to-back with their partners. Then they are to talk for one minute with their partners without turning around. Then ask, "How did you feel about keeping up the conversation?" Explore the need for non-verbal cues of interest to maintain a discussion.

ACTIVITY 1.2

Begin a discussion of non-participation by suddenly discontinuing your own role in class discussion. Ask students how they felt about your non-participation, what they felt during the silence that will probably occur.

Ask this of participators and reticents.

ACTIVITY 1.3

Summarize a lesson by asking the class to think of one sentence that expresses the most important thing to be learned that day. When they have done this silently, ask the non-participating students to give their sentences. (No right or wrong connotation should be given to the answers.)

ACTIVITY 1.4

Role-play a situation in which an officer is talking with a student who has cut school; or a boy is talking with a girl he wants to date, but she isn't interested in him; or a boss talking to a worker who needs his job very much. Have a student stand behind each role-player trying to sense what he is feeling as he speaks. At key moments stop the scene and ask the student standing behind to discuss the feelings of the weaker person. Use these comments to discuss feelings in the classroom.

ACTIVITY 1.5

Keep a large chart for the class and record participation. Perhaps have each child keep his own individual chart of oral participation. At the end of each week award the child who has participated the most and the child who has improved the most. Discuss the importance of oral participation and do this activity just long enough to make the children more aware of their own participation.

ACTIVITY 1.6

Allow a specific amount of time when an interesting topic is being discussed to go around the room and elicit a brief one-word or one-sentence opinion from every member of the class.

ACTIVITY 1.7

Let the children work in small groups on appropriate projects and encourage, as one of the goals of each group, oral participation from everyone in the group. Make the group leader especially responsible for seeing that everyone talks.

ACTIVITY 1.8

Role-play a situation in which three people try every way they know how to get a fourth person to give his opinion. The fourth person will not participate. Have the three students discuss how they felt when the fourth wouldn't respond.

CONCEPT #2

AN "OPEN" CLASSROOM. THE TEACHER SHOULD INDICATE TO THE STUDENTS THAT HE WILL WELCOME AND VALUE ALL OF THEIR COMMENTS.

Every comment makes sense to the student and arises from some motivation within him, so the teacher should seek to show his awareness of what the student "means" by what he says.

The teacher should tell the class often that he wants to hear what they have to say whether the teacher agrees with them or not.

The teacher should actively teach students to welcome and value each other's comments.

People can share feelings and experiences only in a climate of trust and acceptance.

A person comes to know himself through the act of sharing his thoughts with others.

The teacher should take a non-judgmental position to what students say in the classroom. This <u>does not</u> imply that the teacher never agrees or disagrees with what is said, nor is unable to state his position.

It <u>does</u> imply that by setting a non-evaluative climate, both students and teachers can state and own their own feelings honestly.

The only way the teacher or his students can know the needs of one another is when the needs are frankly stated.

ACTIVITY 2.1

Discuss shriveling vs. stroking statements, perhaps using a quotation from <u>Games People Play</u>. Have students role-play a shriveling employer, teacher, friend, and a stroking employer, teacher, friend. Then ask the persons who were treated in the different ways how they felt; then ask persons playing the employer, teacher and friend, how they felt.

ACTIVITY 2.2

Teacher should set a precedent by acknowledging every comment that is made and by teaching the students that when they disagree with each other, they should attack the idea rather than the person.

ACTIVITY 2.3

Discuss "What are words and what do they mean to us?" Students should understand that what they say reflects who they are and how they feel. When we respond to the ideas of others we are responding to their personalities. Everyone must feel as if his ideas are important even if they are disagreed with.

ACTIVITY 2.4

Read aloud the scenes from Up the Down Staircase in which the handsome teacher rejects the letter sent by the girl who adored him and her subsequent suicide attempt. Ask the students to describe the feelings of each before and after the incident occurred. Do any similar experiences occur in their own interactions? How could the teacher have handled the situation?

ACTIVITY 2.5

Discuss with the class the meaning of democracy, stressing the protection of minority rights. Discuss what should therefore be the goal of the educational system within a democracy. Then ask what this implies about the communication within a democratic classroom.

ACTIVITY 2.6

Students role-play a situation in which a guidance counselor is talking to a student who has cut school. First, the counselor should disparage every excuse the student gives; then replay the scene with the counselor accepting and understanding every reason given by the student. Discuss these alternative ways of dealing with people--how do the students feel about them, can they suggest any others?

ACTIVITY 2.7

Role-play a scene in which there are the following people:

1. A person who always placates and makes peace.
2. A person who always argues and makes trouble.
3. A person who withdraws and will not make contact.
4. A person who can be a mixture of all of these depending on the situation.

You can use any series of situations having the students play any and all of these roles. Discuss the effects of each role.

CONCEPT #3 & #4

CONCEPT #3 - ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO DISAGREE WITH YOU AND THEIR CLASSMATES WHENEVER THEY OBJECT TO WHAT HAS BEEN SAID.

Disagreement can help a student re-evaluate his ideas. It is important that this come from peer interaction, as well as from your comments. This concept must be made clear before discussion becomes heated, and students should be reminded of it often.

Disagreement helps a person know where you stand in relationship to his ideas, as well as helping you to clarify your own position.

CONCEPT #4 - ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO PRAISE OR EXPRESS AGREEMENT WITH THEIR CLASSMATES OR YOU WHENEVER THEY SUPPORT WHAT HAS BEEN SAID.

Honestly supporting or agreeing with someone's ideas gives him a good feeling and encourages him to express more ideas.

How students feel about themselves and others affects what they say and how they respond to others.

Students should be taught that what they say affects how people feel about themselves and others, thus affecting how they will speak and act toward others.

ACTIVITY 3-4.1

The teacher should as frequently as possible report on his own feelings and reactions toward the students and toward what he is teaching. If he is sick or grouchy, happy or sad, etc., he should report these feelings to the class.

ACTIVITY 3-4.2

During a period of time in which the teacher is doing the major proportion of the talking, give the students three cards - a red one, green one and white one - which they can hold up during the lecture. The green one means that they agree with what you are saying; the red one means that they disagree; the white one means that they have a question or a comment.

ACTIVITY 3-4.3

Give the children a white card which they are to hold up whenever they have a question or a comment.

ACTIVITY 3-4.4

Discuss feelings. Have children act out various feelings. Express feelings through art work. Frequently ask children how they are feeling at a specific moment in time.

ACTIVITY 3-4.5

With students, find a situation in which two points of view can be expressed. Explore how these two points of view came into being and if both are valid. Encourage disagreement if it is honest and show how it can be helpful to disagree.

ACTIVITY 3-4.6

After students have a test or have had to give oral reports, make a special point of asking for personal feelings and reactions to the situation. If the feelings expressed are uncomfortable, discuss ways whereby the situations can be improved.

ACTIVITY 3-4.7

Have a class discussion of feelings and their importance. From this go into a role-playing situation in which there is some type of problem which actually exists in the classroom or in the lives of the students. Role-play the situation one time where no one reveals his real feelings and one time where everyone does reveal his feelings. Discuss the difference.

ACTIVITY 3-4.8

Have a talking table in one corner of the room where students and teacher may go and invite anyone to accompany them. This can be used especially if the student or teacher has a problem which needs to be discussed in private. A tape recorder should be available for students to air happinesses or complaints. Stress each student's responsibility for what he says and how he says it.

ACTIVITY 3-4.9

Devote a part of every week for general classroom evaluation either in written or oral form. The class could write up a checklist which they could mark every week concerning the teaching and the classroom procedures. Children in K-2 could pick from various pictures (faces of children who are happy, sad, indifferent) depending on how they felt at the time and about what was happening in the class. You could also have a classwide discussion.

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ACTIVITY 3-4.10

Have the students write short "ramblings" on anything at all just so that they focus on feelings at the time or feelings they've had during the week about what has happened in class. These should be anonymous.

ACTIVITY 3-4.11

A period of time should be set aside each day during which the teacher asks the students to report on their feelings about the subject matter which is being taught and also about the way in which it is being taught.

ACTIVITY 3-4.12

When an argument or fight occurs in school, discuss it and show how points of view differ depending on the position of each person.

ACTIVITY 3-4.13

Ask students to rank themselves in the class by how able they think they are by placing themselves into the first, second, third, or fourth quarter. Collect their responses and put them on the board and discuss confidence or lack of it in this class.

ACTIVITY 3-4.14

Give students one red, green and white card (3 in all). During discussions often ask them to hold up the red card if they disagreed with what was said, the green card if they agreed and the white card if undecided.

ACTIVITY 3-4.15

At times ask the class how they feel about a subject matter or classroom procedure issue. Then poll the class on it, using anonymous ballots. Ask the class to predict the vote. Compare predictions with outcomes and discuss the problem of assuming others' beliefs.

ACTIVITY 3-4.16

Many students, particularly in "low ability" classes have many unhappy experiences in school during the day. These snowball because resentment exists, they sulk or rebel, and then they are punished again. When a class comes into your room looking upset or excited say, "We will be studying _____ today, and it will require your full attention. Does anyone have anything to get off his chest now before we begin?"

ACTIVITY 3-4.17

Find the controversial issues in whatever subject you are teaching. Pass out dittoed sheets giving the issue at the top and a few key questions with space for answers below. When students have written answers to each question begin a discussion of the issue.

ACTIVITY 3-4.18

On Friday of each week, ask each student to turn in a 3 x 5 thought card on which he may write anything (or nothing). Explain that lots of things are often left unsaid in school, or thought of afterward. This is to establish another channel of communication between them and you--as much as a friend than as a teacher. The cards will have no effect on their grades, and they will be strictly confidential. They may or may not be anonymous. If some comments seem to run throughout the cards, ditto some typical excerpts and present them to the class for discussion.

CONCEPT #5

ONE PERSON SHOULD SPEAK AT A TIME. COMMUNICATION TAKES PLACE ONLY WHEN THERE ARE ACTIVE LISTENERS.

ACTIVITY 5.1

At any moment during a class discussion when a particularly disruptive student is speaking appropriately, the teacher can begin a conversation with someone else. Do this for just a few seconds and then quickly ask the first student how he felt about it. You probably won't have to rub it in too much.

ACTIVITY 5.2

Role-play the following situation: Two students have a conversation while sitting facing one another. Then put two other students between the two conversers and ask them to talk. Stop both conversations after a couple of minutes and ask the first two how they felt about their conversation now that the two others are there; ask how they feel about the two people in the middle. Ask the two intruders how they felt about their role; were they proud of themselves; did they want to stop at any point?

ACTIVITY 5.3

Tape record a segment of the class period. Then play

back the tape periodically asking the class what someone, whose ideas are muffled, is saying? Or, simply play back the tape asking the class what seems to be needed in order to improve communication in the classroom?

ACTIVITY 5.4

Have the children discuss how they feel when people listen to them, how they feel when people don't listen? Why do we sometimes not listen to what is going on?

CONCEPT #6

TEACHER AND STUDENTS SHOULD ADMIT TO ERRORS WHEN THEY ARE MADE.

Teachers need to encourage students to admit their errors by creating a classroom atmosphere in which errors are not ridiculed nor penalized. They should set an example by admitting their own errors.

ACTIVITY 6.1

Role-play a salesman for a familiar product (like a car, or even school equipment) who praises everything about his product and refuses to admit to any faults. Then role-play the salesman who honestly admits to some inadequacies in his product. Compare reactions to each. Have students add personal experiences with salesman.

ACTIVITY 6.2

Discuss the process Thomas Edison went through in inventing the light bulb. (He tried about 1,500 materials to find a good filament.) Admitting errors leaves you free to go on to do better in the future. When learning to bowl we send a ball into the gutter, then try to adjust our mistake and improve. This trial and error is needed in all learning. Have students give their own trial and error personal experiences with learning.

ACTIVITY 6.3

Each student might give a talk on, "A Mistake I Have Made." He might include the events which led up to it, the reactions of any other people involved, how the situation looked to them, whether he admitted to the mistake, how he felt during the whole period of time, alternative ways that he might have handled the situation.

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ACTIVITY 6.4

Students read aloud the scene from Death of a Salesman in which Biff tries to make Willy realize that the ambitions he had for him were a mistake. Then they might discuss: How does the situation look to Biff? To Willy? How does Willy feel about Biff? How does Biff feel about Willy? Why won't Willy admit his mistake? Is there any other approach Biff could have used to communicate his feelings to Willy?

ACTIVITY 6.5

Students role-play a scene in which Jefferson Davis and Abraham Lincoln discuss their differences before the start of the Civil War--first, without their admitting to any errors; then with each admitting to errors. This could be tried too, with Adolph Hitler, and Moshe Dayan, with George Wallace and H. Rap Brown, with Lyndon Johnson and Ho Chi Minh. Follow this with discussion of how the actors and the audience felt as the scene progressed, and what can be learned.

ACTIVITY 6.6

As the teacher, it is important to admit to errors made and to make the children feel as if it is not wrong to make an error. Discuss how important it is to make mistakes in order to learn.

CONCEPT #7

WHENEVER POSSIBLE, ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO RELATE WHAT THEY SAY TO WHAT OTHERS IN THE CLASS HAVE SAID.

The desire to relate your comments to previous comments requires careful and reflective listening on your part. Drawing relationships helps others understand what you are attempting to say and how your comments relate to their own.

ACTIVITY 7.1

One student begins a story and each student adds a segment to the story.

ACTIVITY 7.2

Role-play a situation in which everything each student says is in NO WAY related to what has already been said. The teacher could also answer questions of students with comments that have no bearing on what the student has asked. Discuss this and decide on ways to improve the situation.

ACTIVITY 7.3

Choose three or four students who during a specific period of time will observe the classroom discussion and make note of when people leave the topic under discussion and do not relate to what is being said.

ACTIVITY 7.4

When one student makes a comment have another student give what he feels the intent behind the statement is. This can be done in pairs, in small groups, or with the entire class.

ACTIVITY 7.5

When one student makes a statement have another student paraphrase the statement according to the way he understands it.

ACTIVITY 7.6

One student makes a short statement and the next student repeats the statement and adds a statement of his own relating to what has already been said.

ACTIVITY 7.7

One child says a word; the next child repeats the word and adds one which is related in some way to the previous word.

ACTIVITY 7.8

Pair up all of the students. Have one student say something and the other student repeat what was said attempting to imitate the actions and expressions of the other.

CONCEPT #8

LOOK AT THE PERSON YOU'RE SPEAKING TO AND AT PEOPLE WHO SPEAK TO YOU.

Looking at someone provides feedback about your impact on him and indicates your interest in him.

People send both verbal and non-verbal messages to you. To truly understand what others are attempting to communicate, you must attend to their words and to their physical behavior.

ACTIVITY 8.1

Discuss the different colors of eyes and why we have eyes. Draw eyes and have each child tell how his eyes are looking. (Discuss what we communicate with our eyes.)

ACTIVITY 8.2

As the teacher, make direct eye contact with the class and with individuals with whom you are speaking.

ACTIVITY 8.3

Teach a lesson or a part of a lesson without looking at the students at all. Ask them how it made them feel.

ACTIVITY 8.4

Have children cover their eyes while they speak to one another. Discuss how this makes them feel and why.

ACTIVITY 8.5

As the teacher, cultivate eye contact in all situations. Discuss importance of it and why it is difficult to do at times.

ACTIVITY 8.6

Have each student keep a chart for a short period of time which indicates when he looked at someone with whom he was talking, and if he didn't, where was he looking? Do this just to cultivate the awareness of eye contact.

*ACTIVITY 8.7

Have an exercise that goes like this: One student says something and another student repeats exactly what the first said. A third student says what he thinks the first student meant. Other students are asked to give their interpretations of what they heard. Check back each time with the original speaker to see if each interpretation is accurate. If not, why not?

*ACTIVITY 8.8

Divide the students into pairs or groups of three or four. One student makes a statement of value (value judgment). A second student models this, using the same words, intonation, and physical movement. Then he paraphrases what the first student has said but keeps the same meaning. Then he says what he thinks the first person really meant. These three levels are: modeling, meaning and understanding.

*ACTIVITY 8.9

If two people disagree on a subject have them sit in chairs facing one another. As they discuss the topic have them move their chairs closer together or farther apart, depending on how they feel about each other at each point in the conversation. Discuss what happened and why.

ACTIVITY 8.10

Have students pair up, sit with their backs to each other and talk for thirty seconds to one minute. At the end of the time have each pair of students discuss how it made them feel.

ACTIVITY 8.11

Have a thirty second to one minute experience during which two people make eye contact. After this period of time, ask the students to report on how they felt.

ACTIVITY 8.12

Discuss how we communicate non-verbally with our eyes. Do the key exercises in which three students attempt to show love just with their eyes and six students show hate. The middle of the three students holds a key and another student must discover who has the key just by looking at the eyes of the nine students.

* *Refer to Concepts 10.10, 10.11 and 10.12 in which these activities may also be used.*

CONCEPT #9

YOU SHOULD ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO RELATE THEIR EXPERIENCES OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM TO WHATEVER IS BEING DISCUSSED.

The more that classroom learning can reflect the student's world, the more involved he will be in learning.

Sharing personal experiences often helps to build trust and comfort in a group. It helps to break down the walls between school and "real-life."

Classroom discussions should deal with, not avoid, the students' world outside of the classroom.

When we relate what we are to learn to what we already know, we can retain and use our new learnings better.

ACTIVITY 9.1

In any class discussion on a topic in the syllabus, ask the class "What does this mean to you in your life?" Break the class up into small groups as often as possible to discuss, "How does this help you to understand something better in your own life?" Share the general ideas raised in the groups with the whole class. Often ask the class to meet in small groups to plan a skit which depicts the usefulness of the materials being learned in a person's life. Ask them to use a real-life experience of one member of the group, if they can.

ACTIVITY 9.2

Frequently as the children to tell about similar experiences they have outside the classroom that are relevant to what is being discussed in the classroom.

ACTIVITY 9.3

The teacher can relate a personal incident from his own life experience. Then he can ask the class, "Do you think that this is a good idea? Would you like me to do it again? If so, why?" Then discuss the importance and significance of sharing meaningful personal experiences with others.

ACTIVITY 9.4

Students give talks on, "An Experience I Learned From" in which they strive to make their own experience relevant to the interests of the others in the class and to the work being done in class.

ACTIVITY 9.5

Read aloud the scene between Jim (the Gentleman Caller) and Laura in "The Glass Menagerie." Discuss Jim's use of his own experiences to help Laura change her feelings about

herself. Ask the class how they think Jim feels about Laura. Ask them to tell about any experiences they have had in which they helped someone else by relating an experience. Ask them to tell about any experiences they have had in which they were helped by someone telling them about an experience from his own life. Discuss the dangers of relying too heavily on this.

ACTIVITY 9.6

Choose one concept that you are teaching in the classroom. Have the children make up a project that demands the use of this concept outside of the classroom.

ACTIVITY 9.7

Put the children into small groups or have a classwide discussion on "how school affects my life." You might begin this discussion by having each child write one sentence on what he did at home that was affected by what he learned at school. Children who can't write could draw a picture.

CONCEPT #10

BOTH YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS SHOULD TRY TO UNDERSTAND COMMENTS MADE FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE PERSON SPEAKING.

In order to understand what a person means, you have to understand how the situation looks to him.

Every individual has a unique meaning for the words we use in everyday talk.

Every person perceives and recounts situations differently according to his unique backlog of experiences and biological structure.

ACTIVITY 10.1

Role-play a "non-conformist" talking to a policeman. Have a student stand behind each character and tell periodically what he thinks the person is thinking and feeling as he talks. Then do this with a teacher and a disciplinary problem or a very quiet student.

ACTIVITY 10.2

Read the story about welfare in Hayakawa's Language in Thought and Action. Discuss the meaning of the problem raised and the significance of it to the classroom.

ACTIVITY 10.3

Ask students to write down the first image that comes to

their minds when certain words are read to them, such as: school, girl, book, Negro, San Francisco, hippies, fear, hate, love, learning, English class, happiness, etc. They should do this anonymously. Collect the papers and read the class's responses (or ask a student to read them aloud.) Then discuss the differences in point of view brought out by this.

ACTIVITY 10.4

Divide the class into small groups; ask each group to role-play a situation in which a conflict of some kind occurred because people were unable to understand the point of view of others. Replay each scene trying to find alternative ways of better handling the situations.

ACTIVITY 10.5

Read aloud the scenes from "West Side Story" which depict the differing points of view between the two groups of teenagers. Discuss how they might have understood each other better.

ACTIVITY 10.6

Get pictures of two people arguing. Have the children discuss the picture and tell who is winning the argument, what they are arguing about, why they are arguing and how they could settle the argument.

ACTIVITY 10.7

Role-play a group discussing a mutual problem or planning an activity. However, give each student a hidden agenda to carry out, for example:

a. is the leader
b. wants to be leader, so he wants a to look bad
c. wants everyone to like him, so he agrees with everyone
d. thinks the whole idea is childish
e. wants to end the meeting as quickly as possible
f. has no confidence in the group, so he thinks of dangers involved in every proposed plan
g. likes e very much, but despises f
h. dislikes g

Discuss how differing needs and attitudes in a group influence communication; relate to the class itself.

ACTIVITY 10.8

When two students get into a heated argument in class, ask them to sit at opposite ends of the room and then ask the class to discuss their points of view as they see them. See if the class can come up with a workable compromise. Then ask the two students what they thought about what the

class had said. Ask the class what can be learned from the situation.

ACTIVITY 10.9

At about the last quarter of the semester or year, the class could be encouraged to have a discussion called, "It's All Over." They could pretend that the term is over and they are discussing what they have learned, what they wished they had learned, what they liked about the class and what they didn't like. These ideas can be used to modify the syllabus for the remaining time. The teacher probably should be out of the room during this time. Ask the class to put their generally agreed-upon ideas on the board for him to read when he returns.

ACTIVITY 10.10

Have an exercise that goes like this. One student says something and another student repeats exactly what the first said. A third student says what he thinks the first student meant. Other students are asked to give their interpretations of what they heard. Check back each time with the original speaker to see if each interpretation is accurate. If not, why not?

ACTIVITY 10.11

Divide the students into pairs or groups of three or four. One student makes a statement of value (value judgment). A second student models this, using the same words, intonation and physical movement. Then he paraphrases what the first student has said but keeps the same meaning. Then he says what he thinks the first person really meant. These three levels are: modeling, meaning, and understanding.

ACTIVITY 10.12

If two people disagree on a subject have them sit in chairs facing each other. As they discuss the topic have them move their chairs closer together or farther apart, depending on how they feel about each other at each point of the conversation. Discuss what happened and why.

CONCEPT #11

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION SHOULD BE AMONG STUDENTS AS WELL AS BETWEEN TEACHER AND STUDENTS.

Students need to regard one another as potential sources of learning. Respect for oneself and one's peers leads to receptive learning. (Our goal is to help students become independent of us in pursuing their education.

Learning from peers, therefore, is as important as relying on the teacher for learning.)

Opportunities should be built into lessons for students to talk among themselves.

ACTIVITY 11.1

Put the children in a role-playing situation in which each child at some time has the opportunity of being the teacher. The child who is the teacher should be the one to decide how he wants either the rest of the class or just three or four other students to act. Discuss each child's conception of "teacher."

ACTIVITY 11.2

Divide children into small groups of four or five and let the children plan any activity which they can present to the rest of the class. At first the teacher will have to structure the activity in such a way so that the children have just a small segment which they must prepare for the rest of the class. As they get more and more practice in this, the segment of the activity can be enlarged.

ACTIVITY 11.3

Use the Weekly Reader or some such similar magazine or story book (could also use poems) and divide the class into small groups and make each group responsible for presenting a page of the magazine or a whole story or poem to the rest of the class in any manner which they choose.

ACTIVITY 11.4

Break the class into small groups of five children each and give them ten minutes to decide anything that they would like to do. After each group has reached a decision, arrange for each group to be able to carry through its activity.

ACTIVITY 11.5

Permit students certain half-hour to hour segments of time during which they may plan and carry on the teaching of single lessons and eventually whole units. Planning may involve the entire class or the class may be broken into small groups of four, five or six students.

CONCEPT #12

WHEN IN DOUBT, WHEN CURIOUS, WHEN INTERESTED - ASK QUESTIONS.

The teacher should encourage students to question each other as well as to question him.

Asking questions clarifies messages--too often we assume that we understand what we hear when we simply comprehend the vocabulary.

Asking questions shows interest. While all can't be answered, it is never wrong to pose one. The time, place, and person you ask affects the answer you will get.

Having students ask questions helps the teacher diagnose students' interests, needs, and concerns.

Discuss with your class the impact of the phrasing of questions, the mood of the listener, and the point in the discussion on the kinds of answers you or your students can provide to questions asked.

ACTIVITY 12.1

Discuss awkward questions such as: asking for a date, asking for a favor, asking for a job, or a raise, asking for a better grade, etc. Why are these occasionally awkward? What can we learn about ourselves from considering the questions which are most awkward for us to ask?

ACTIVITY 12.2

Read a scene from "Inherit the Wind" or "To Sir With Love" in which we learn a great deal about a person's character through the judicious asking of questions. Discuss the class's feelings about questions which pry too deeply into one's personal affairs. Discuss situations in which they have used questions in order to understand someone better.

ACTIVITY 12.3

Select one origami activity. Have a student describe it to the class without allowing them to ask any questions. Ask another student to describe another origami activity and allow student questions. Discuss the need for questions to clarify information received. Ask students for incidents from their own lives in which instructions were garbled.

ACTIVITY 12.4

Have the children sit in a circle during sharing time and concentrate on having the children direct questions and comments to one another rather than to the teacher.

ACTIVITY 12.5

Spend three or four ten-minute segments each class day during which the children are requested to direct comments of any sort (preferably relevant to the learning of the day or week) to their fellow students. The teacher could structure this time by throwing out a topic for discussion and letting the class discuss it in any way they see fit. Could be called "student forum time."

ACTIVITY 12.6

Many questions directed to the teacher about the work being done or the topic under discussion can be reflected back to the class by such comments as: "What do the rest of you think?" "Can anyone else answer that question?" "Let's see what other people have to say on that." etc.

ACTIVITY 12.7

Before assignments are turned in to the teacher, students can meet in groups to read each other's work and make necessary corrections. This can be "motivated" by giving every person in a group the same grade based on the average quality of work put out by that group.

ACTIVITY 12.8

Homework assignments can be gone over by pairs of small groups of students comparing answers. The teacher need merely be a resource person to clarify disagreements.

ACTIVITY 12.9

Many routine assignment review sessions can be led by one, or a group of students, instead of the teacher. The student need not have all the answers himself. He can call on others to answer and then ask the rest of the class if they agree. The teacher need only intervene when the majority of the class is wrong.

ACTIVITY 12.10

Pick a line from a play, write it on the board. Select three possible emotions with which it could be read, e.g., "My brother is sick and I can't do anything about it." Angry, sad or desperate. Ask students to pick one of the emotions and to read the line with it in mind. Then see if the others in the class can guess what he was portraying. Discuss the difficulty of being aware of

how a person feels when he speaks. Discuss the value of asking people how they are feeling. Discuss incidents from the students' lives when they were surprised to find out how someone felt in a situation.

ACTIVITY 12.11

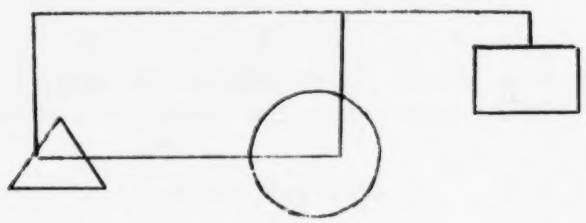
Give a small group of students a scene from a play to read silently. Ask them to take characters and to write on a piece of paper one word which describes the feeling of the character they are portraying. Have them read the scene to the class. Ask the class to write down one word which describes the feeling of each character in the scene. Compare the words used. Discuss the difficulty of being aware of how a person feels when he speaks. Discuss the value of asking people how they are feeling. Discuss incidents from the students' lives when they were surprised to find out how someone felt in a situation.

ACTIVITY 12.13

One student reads a story to the class, while the teacher prepares questions on several details of the story. The questions are then presented to the class. Differences among their answers will indicate the difficulties of accurate listening.

ACTIVITY 12.14

Ask one student to go to the board. Another student tries to describe the figure below, so that the student at the board can draw it. Neither can look at the other, nor ask any questions of the other. Repeat this process, but allow the student at the board to ask questions of the student describing the drawing. Discuss the difference in the accuracy of the results and the significance of asking questions to gain accurate information.



ACTIVITY 12.15

During sharing time appoint three children to ask questions of the person who is sharing.

a. You, as teacher, may appoint them before the person shares.
b. You may appoint them after the person has shared.
c. Ask for volunteers either before or after.
d. Have the sharer ask for questions.

ACTIVITY 12.16

The teacher asks the students to give her directions to do something in front of the classroom. She deliberately confuses whatever they say, e.g., "Write your name on the blackboard." (write with pencil) "Sit at your desk." (sit facing away from the desk or sit on the floor) "Open the door." (Open and close the door immediately) Ask students if what you have done was what they pictured in their minds when they gave you the order. Ask students if they remember any instances of confused instructions in their own family.

ACTIVITY 12.17

Discuss why we ask questions, what is the use of asking questions, when do we ask questions, who have you recently asked a question of, etc.?

ACTIVITY 12.18

Have the students sit in a circle and hold an object. One person is chosen to begin and he is permitted to ask another person a question about that person's object. If the person answers the question he becomes the one to ask the next question of someone else. The object of the game is to be able to ask and answer all questions. Anyone who can't answer a question or can't think of a question to ask must leave the circle.

ACTIVITY 12.19

When a student brings in something to share, have him share it ONLY by answering the questions of his classmates.

ACTIVITY 12.20

One person leaves the room and the others decide on an object in the room. When the person comes back he must guess what that object is by asking questions which can be answered yes or no.

CONCEPT #13

ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE APPLICABLE WHEN A STUDENT IS SPEAKING TO THE CLASS.

ACTIVITY 13.1

Use speaking stamps in order to get the children to take part in sharing time activities. Each child who is going to speak that day gets a speaking stamp. On this stamp he might write what his main topic is or he may draw a picture of the object about which he is going to speak.

ACTIVITY 13.2

The remainder of the children who CHOOSE to listen to the speakers should be given "listening labels" so that they know that they will be good listeners for the day.

ACTIVITY 13.3

A chairman should be chosen each day to introduce each person who is going to speak. This person should also be in charge of asking the class if they have any comments concerning what they especially liked about what they heard and if they have any suggestions for future improvement. These suggestions not only apply to individual speakers but also to the way in which the sharing time was organized and run.

ACTIVITY 13.4

Children should be encouraged to ask each other questions. You might begin this process by appointing two or three people to be responsible for asking questions of each speaker. Follow this up by giving the speaker a chance to ask his audience questions.

ACTIVITY 13.5

Get a large refrigerator box and cut a hole in the top front of it in order to simulate a television set. Let each speaker get inside the television. One of the audience will be responsible for turning the set on. After the entire program has been seen (three or four children at a time), give the audience a chance to "meet the performers" and ask them questions.

ACTIVITY 13.6

Have the children put their objects in a bag and let the audience ask questions about the object before it is shown.

ACTIVITY 13.7

Discuss with the class what types of questions each speaker should answer when he is sharing an object or an experience. Put these questions on the board and let various members of the audience ask these questions one at a time and the speaker will respond to them. For instance: What is it? (description of object or experience) Where did you get it? When did it happen? How do (did) you feel about it? Why did you get it?

ACTIVITY 13.8

Be sure to let the children evolve their own rules for carrying out sharing time. Along with this they should develop ways of implementing these rules and methods of handling abuses of rules. Conduct of the speakers and the listeners must be considered. In each situation the listeners must be given an active role. Discuss how to be an active listener.

ACTIVITY 13.9

After each child shares his experience or object, have a child summarize what was said. With practice you might have two or three children summarize in their own words what each of the four or five speakers said after everyone has spoken. This might mean having the summarizers take notes. In earlier grades the summarizing will have to be done at the end of each speech and might just be one or two words which give the main topic discussed.

ACTIVITY 13.10

Divide the children into small groups of six or seven and let each small group handle its own sharing time. A variation on this would be to have each group then vote on the most interesting speaker and have this speaker present his object or experience to the entire class.

ACTIVITY 13.11

For an exercise in non-verbal communication have each child select an object which he can tell about in pantomime. Let the other children guess what the object does and then what it is.

ACTIVITY 13.12

Always have a treasure chest full of objects so that a child can choose one to tell about if he is unable to bring something from home.

ACTIVITY 13.13

Have some clay available. Let a child fashion something from the clay in front of the class and then describe what he has fashioned. Let the class tell what they think the clay looks like. This is good for teaching the fact that we all see things differently and that there is a relativity to many things in this life depending on each person's perception. There is no right or wrong answer in this exercise and the children are NOT to guess what the child has made. They are just to give their own unique perceptions of the object.

ACTIVITY 13.14

Give each child in the audience a green card and a red card. After the speaker has made his presentation, have the children who have questions and who did not understand some segment of the presentation raise the red card. Have the children who listened carefully and could understand everything that was said raise the green card. You might add a yellow card for those children who would like to share a similar related experience or who have something to add to what has already been said.

ACTIVITY 13.15

Have some child be responsible for standing at the blackboard and writing down the topic of each child who is going to share something. This would be a good activity for the reticent child. At the end of sharing time, let him read the topics from the board. This also provides a summary.

ACTIVITY 13.16

Have only those children who wish to be listeners take active listening roles. Others who do not wish to abide by the rules set up by the class, should be given seat work to do quietly. It would be a privilege and a responsibility to be a listener as well as a speaker.

ACTIVITY 13.17

If you have a list of vocabulary words for the students to learn, put each word on a card. Pair the students off and give each pair one card. They must portray verbally and non-verbally, what the word is, what its meaning is, and if it is a representation of an object, what the object looks like.

A variation of this is to let each student work alone or to vary the size of the group from two to five students.

Students must raise their hands when they know the word and its meaning and they must tell what they saw that led them to the answer.

ACTIVITY 13.18

In classwide discussion, pair off the students and give each pair one piece of paper on which to write the answer to the question. The students must confer with each other before writing down the answer and before raising their hands to answer it.

CONCEPT #14

BASICS OF TEACHING THE FOUNDATION OF SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION.

ACTIVITY 14.1

In introducing the small group discussion, the class as a whole should set up the following parameters: When they would like to use small groups, the rules that are to be followed while engaged in small group discussion and means of punishing violators, ways of involving everyone in the discussion and the task.

ACTIVITY 14.2

A cardinal rule for success in small group discussion is that each group is doing its own self-governing and its own discipline. Each group must set up its own rules and regulations if it does not agree with those set down by the entire class in an earlier session.

ACTIVITY 14.3

Present the class with a task which can be done in small groups in about twenty minutes. Follow this task by having each member of the class write down in detail precisely what he did during the preceding discussion and what his attitude was. Have each student include the amount of participation, the kind of participation, the role, if any assumed, and how he felt about himself as well as the activity. In a classwide discussion, generate roles that people play in small group work.

ACTIVITY 14.4

After you have a list of roles that can be played, put these on cards. When the groups meet again for another task give these cards to the members of each group and let them play the roles that their cards call for. Do not tell who has what role until after the task. Let each group see if they can discover what the other has been doing.

ACTIVITY 14.5

Discuss how we interact in a group, how leaders are chosen. Are there situations when they aren't chosen and why? Make the class abundantly aware of the way each member acts in a group and how his actions and attitudes change according to different groups and with different tasks. Why is this so?

ACTIVITY 14.6

Divide the class into groups (assign groups or let the students decide on a way for working in groups). Appoint two observers to watch each group and at the end of the period make a report on how the group achieved its goal. Observers may also report to the group observed.

CONCEPT #15

THE FOLLOWING ARE ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE NOT CLASSIFIED UNDER ANY PARTICULAR CONCEPTS OR CATEGORIES.

ACTIVITY 15.1

At the beginning of school have the class write down their perception and expectations of the teacher and two or three other students. Keep these and do it again in three or four weeks. Compare and discuss.

ACTIVITY 15.2

Have students choose a group of words that they can show. A person shows one word and the group together shows a whole sentence - relating to one another. Done non-verbally.

ACTIVITY 15.3

Key Experiment:

One person leaves the room. Nine people sit in a row and one person is given a key. The person outside the room must guess who has the key by making eye contact or placing his hands on the hands of a person. The one with the key thinks thoughts of love and acceptance, all others, hostility.

ACTIVITY 15.4

In the middle of a lesson or activity, have students freeze in position and tell what they are feeling at the moment. Do the feelings differ from those of a minute ago? Why?

ACTIVITY 15.5

In working with values, have a child make a list of what he considers good and a list of what he considers bad. Have children exchange lists and mark off what they agree with and disagree with. Object is to show relativity of good and bad depending on person and situation.

ACTIVITY 15.6

When drawing a picture have the students explain the emotion shown in the picture and the motivation behind the emotion.

ACTIVITY 15.7

Have children take turns calling out a motion for all to do. Then have each child tell what this motion suggests to him, also who would use this motion.

ACTIVITY 15.8

One person starts a rhythmic movement. Another person adds a different movement, but with the same rhythm - three or four people in a group.

ACTIVITY 15.9

Have one child pose. Another child poses in relation to the first - then another and another. A person tells what his pose was. Stress how the picture changes with each addition.

ACTIVITY 15.10

In any discussion or show of feelings, discuss motivation or cause.

ACTIVITY 15.11

Have students shut their eyes. Provide them with a series of experiences: taste, touch, smell and sound. Then progressively block off all of the other senses and provide experiences. Discuss this.

ACTIVITY 15.12

Have one person close his eyes and another person lead him around. Reverse roles and then discuss.

ACTIVITY 15.13

Stand back to back with a person. Argue, be tender, play and dance in this position. Can also be done with hands.

ACTIVITY 15.14

Introduce yourself while everyone has his eyes shut. Never go around in a circle. Let a person speak when he feels like it.

ACTIVITY 15.15

Have students make a sound to indicate how they feel - all the boys, all the girls, everyone.

Ask students to show how they feel rather than say it.

ACTIVITY 15.16

Set up a scene where children do not tell the truth. Replay it where they do tell the truth. Which was harder, and why?

ACTIVITY 15.17

In selecting groups, have everyone mill around until they select groups of four or five.

ACTIVITY 15.18

Have students invent an animal and tell all about him. Make a family for him and discuss his problems or communication.

ACTIVITY 15.19

Turn class into a symphony. A person makes a sound. Someone directs.

ACTIVITY 15.20

Have students start or end the day with a series of statements beginning with "I like..." or "I don't like..."

ACTIVITY 15.21

Have a farm parade. A number of "judges" give short speeches on the merits of each "animal."

ACTIVITY 15.22

At the end of each activity, have the children tell ways of improving it and what they liked and didn't like. At the end of the day they relate the activities of the day and suggest some for tomorrow.

ACTIVITY 15.23

For a story such as The Three Pigs - divide the class into 4 segments - 3 pigs and 1 wolf. Play out the story using everyone simultaneously.

ACTIVITY 15.24

Write a message on a piece of paper. One child reads the message and then tells it to a second child who carries out the message.

ACTIVITY 15.25

With telephones - one child calls a second child and gives him a message which the second child then passes on to a third child.

ACTIVITY 15.26

Give periodic breaks during the day when the children may talk with one another.

ACTIVITY 15.27

When writing a poem, try the following variations:

A) Individual writes a poem.

B) A group of 4 or 5 children write one poem.

C) The entire class writes one poem.

ACTIVITY 15.28

Have a large colored ball. Throw the ball to whomever is speaking at the time.

ACTIVITY 15.29

Make a series of various sized colored blocks and use them to organize and sequence a story. Teacher tells the story and the children move the blocks around. Make the blocks for characters, setting, and plot.

ACTIVITY 15.30

Set up a "thinking box," island cards (cards which children take when they don't wish to speak), and a talking table.

ACTIVITY 15.31

Build entire lessons around words such as:

serendipity

communication

magic

ACTIVITY 15.32

Hear Me Scramble:

Children sit in chairs in a row. They are numbered 1 through 8. Teacher says No. 2 exchange seats with No. 4,

etc. Everybody takes his own chair. Child who gets in wrong chair leaves the game. Repeat.

ACTIVITY 15.33

1. Silent communication through facial expression; through use of the hands; through use of the feet.

2. Paint a smile on a child's face with clown paint and let him be a gay clown or a sad clown.

3. Take a deck of "Old Maid" cards and expose four cards briefly - have each child write down the card which he saw.

4. Have the children sit in a circle. While they are going through a predescribed motion (e.g., clapping hands together and then slapping hands against the knee), let each child take a turn deciding on a vocabulary category such as an adult in the music world - quickly take turns naming a different personality - rhyming words to teacher and families; verbs, nouns, etc. One child acts as a referee and as soon as one player fails to name his word or confuses his bodily motions he is out and the others continue without him until the last person becomes a winner.

ACTIVITY 15.34

Increase vocabulary by having the teacher bring a word on a paper hidden up her sleeve. Next day each child brings a word. Have the children suggest either rhyming words or connotative words. If you want to teach "feelings," use the word soft, etc.

ACTIVITY 15.35

To teach a child awareness of another child's face, have him find a child in the group with grey eyes, blue eyes, brown eyes; with straight eye brows, curved eye brows, etc.

ACTIVITY 15.36

Vary the traditional "Simon Says" by using words "I would like you to....."

ACTIVITY 15.37

Use the words "I see..." and describe the person or object without naming it.

ACTIVITY 15.38

Tape record a series of sounds that communicate messages to us. Discuss the meaning of this type of communication.

ACTIVITY 15.39

Express feelings about a person in terms of food, past history, car, country, type of literature, etc.

ACTIVITY 15.40

Have a student draw a picture of something that makes a particular kind of sound. Hide the picture, make the sound and then have the rest of the children guess the picture.

ACTIVITY 15.41

As a means of feedback, have a child keep an experience chart dealing specifically with communication. Answer the following kinds of questions:

Who did I enjoy talking with most today and why?

How did I feel today?

What made me feel that way?

ACTIVITY 15.42

Have a speaker give a sentence and have the class echo the sentence. The farther back in the class the words are echoed, the quieter they get.

ACTIVITY 15.43

Permit the children to explore the room and make whatever sounds they can. After a while have everyone freeze where he is and close his eyes. Each child then takes his turn making a sound while the others guess what it is and what it could be.

ACTIVITY 15.44

Ask a class for volunteers to give a speech. Then have the class focus on the experience they had in deciding whether or not to volunteer. Imagine two people inside your head - one telling you not to volunteer and one telling you to volunteer. Picture a conversation between the two with your eyes closed. Ask for reports and possible acting out of what happened.

ACTIVITY 15.45

Members of the group gather close together, close their eyes, stretch out their hands and "feel their space" - then be aware of their contact with others. Discuss feelings about contact and aloneness.

ACTIVITY 15.46

Imitate bodily posture of yourself at a younger age - write slowly, imitate speech.

ACTIVITY 15.47

Astronauts:

Three astronauts in space capsule.

Ground control panel gives instructions and astronauts repeat - vica versa.

ACTIVITY 15.48

Have a class where no talking or writing is permitted. Carry out all learning non-verbally. Choose leaders non-verbally. Discuss what happened at end. (Limit class time for this activity to five minutes.)

APPENDIX

A "MODEL" PLAN FOR EIGHT LESSONS

As used by master teacher in Reticence Institute - August, 1968

COMMUNICATION CONCEPTS

Data Sheet

(To be developed with students)

Communication: Message:

Sender: Receiver:

Channel: Noise:

Feedback:

Draw a Picture of Communication

(Identify each part with the concepts)

"WHAT I USUALLY DO AND SAY"

(Interview Format for Projects in Role-Playing)

"When my friends ignore me I usually:

"When my teachers try to punish me:

"When someone I don't like gets in trouble:

"When I'm confused:

"When others need help:

"The worst possible situation for me to be in (in school) is:

(Teacher-interviewer should attempt to have the student specify as much as possible about each, i.e., where, when, has it ever happened this way, etc.....

Teacher-student dyad to role-play privately from the above, teacher to encourage student to develop alternative responses....)

FEEDBACK SHEET

(Student)

"What I liked best in today's session:

"What I didn't like:

"What I learned about myself today:

"How I feel about the other students:

"One thing I'm really afraid of as far as communication is concerned:

"How my teacher made me feel today:

"What I'll tell my friends about today's session:

SESSION I - Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication Techniques for Getting Acquainted

Context

"Education has done very well in these gathering and imparting functions. It has done far less well in helping its students in discovering the personal meaning of such information for their own lives and behavior."
(Combs and Snygg, Individual Behavior)

"Talking is not teaching, listening is not learning. The teaching-learning experience is an organic whole, characterized by communication."
(Cantor, The Teaching Learning Process)

"The organism reacts to the field as it is experienced and perceived. This perpetual field is, for the individual, 'reality'."
(Rogers, Client-Centered Therapy)

Goals

1. To introduce the processes of verbal and non-verbal communication.
2. To provide symbolic opportunities for making and enhancing contact.
3. To encourage the recognition of the function of verbal and non-verbal symbols in communicative exchange (as they serve to facilitate and restrict contact).
4. To encourage recognition of the impact of private symbols on communicative exchange.

Concepts to be developed:

1. Communication is a process which provides for the satisfaction of needs, the realization of personal and social goals, and the initiation and enhancement of contacts with internal and external experience (see data sheet for components).
2. Communication is structured by beliefs and expectations.

Activities

1. Orientation to the workshop, discussion of goals, etc.
2. Contact experiences to provide insight into feelings about self and others (small groups).
   a. Construction of targets to facilitate self-identification.
   b. Constructing symbols to identify feelings about others.
   c. Discussion of simulated targets.
   d. Discussion of the following:
      What did we discover about ourselves?
      What did we discover about the way others felt about us?
      How can we use these awarenesses to communicate more effectively?
3. Introduction to the Processes of Communication.
4. Practice in sending and receiving messages (small groups).
5. Discussion of the Process of Distortion
   a. "Feedback exercise"
6. Making contact with others:
   a. Formation of the student-teacher dyad.
   b. Dyads to select a feeling from the story and represent it non-verbally to the group.
   c. Dyads to practice communicating non-verbal messages about feelings.
7. Feedback on session.

SESSION II - Words: Their Effect on Our Perceptions, Feelings and Attitudes.

Context

"But as a teacher also, I have found that I am enriched when I can open channels through which others can share themselves with me."
(Rogers, On Becoming A Person)

Goals

To provide experiences in which the student can inspect and control the way language operates; to assist and restrict his thinking and feeling in communicative exchange.

Concepts to be developed

1. Words are important and useful as tools for thinking and communicating.
2. Words enable one to stabilize experience.
3. Words help one act in face of uncertainty.
4. Words enable one to attack, defend and support the feelings of others.
5. Words frequently dominate one's thinking and feeling.
6. Words create an illusion of permanence and consequently encourage one to depend upon them as substitutes for experience.

Activities

1. Creation of verbal and non-verbal messages
   a. Each student-teacher dyad will construct representations of various sensory and conceptual images.
   b. Emphasis will be placed on the role language plays in distorting messages.
2. Relating verbal and non-verbal imagery - multi-media experiences will be created in which student will create images consisting of verbal and non-verbal symbols.
3. Using language effectively
   a. Students will participate in various exercises as part of a larger process of inquiry through language.
   b. Students will participate in the game, "What is this? Can you tell me anything else?" Specific verbal cues will be used to encourage and discourage accurate thinking-perceiving.
4. Inspecting our self-images
   a. Using ads from various magazines, as well as symbols obtained from the news and other sources, attention will be given to the role language plays in creating and reinforcing an illusion of identity, specifically as it shapes the student's role expectations.
   b. Discussion will conclude with the presentation of images produced by each teacher-student dyad.
5. Feedback on session

SESSION III - Listening for Learning

Context

"I have come to feel that the only learning which significantly influences behavior is self-discovered, self-appropriated learning."

(Rogers, On Becoming A Person)

"Both researchers and pedagogues have much to learn from psychotherapists. For one thing, therapists must know how to listen. For another, they deal with the knottiest problems of creativity or lack of it. And they specialize in that self-awareness which is a prerequisite to control in the process of learning how to learn, and in learning how to teach..."
(Elton Carter, personnel communication)

Goals

1. To introduce the concept that listening is a selective process.
2. To provide opportunities for the examination of listening behavior.

Concepts to be developed

1. Listening is a complex process involving sensing, perceiving, conceptualizing and interpreting which results in the restructuring of messages according to listener needs and expectations.
2. Listening behavior is frequently restrictive.

Activities

1. Introduction to a model of the listening process
   a. Opportunities for the student to suggest how he might control his listening.
   b. Students will be introduced to the role of redundancy in listening.
   c. Students will be encouraged to see how they distort messages.
   d. Various techniques will be used to encourage the student to become a more active listener.
2. Listening to verbal and non-verbal messages - controlling verbal bias
   a. Processing non-verbal messages
   b. Processing verbal messages
3. Listening from another's point of view
   a. Student-teacher dyads will be encouraged to develop messages where distorting factors, evaluations,

projections, etc. are controlled.

b. Dyads will participate in "empathy exchanges" which will provide for:

the identification of points of view.
the generation of alternatives to control distortion.
the listening from alternative viewpoints.

SESSIONS IV AND V - Working With Others in Groups and Solving Problems Together

Context

"We learn also about our own strengths and limits and extend them by overcoming difficulties, by straining ourselves to the utmost, by meeting challenge and hardship, even by failing."
(Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being)

"There are two aims which the teacher should have in view when addressing his students...first, to help the student to solve the problem at hand. Second, to develop the student's ability so that he may solve future problems by himself."
(Polya, How to Solve It)

"By and large, the things taught children are useless and quite alien to their personal reality. It is a tragedy that our society puts so much value on data rather than insight, behavior rather than personal integrity. So much youthful beauty gone to waste!"
(Fromm, Look Magazine, May, 1964)

Goals

1. To encourage students to identify intra-group conflicts and attempt their resolutions.
2. To encourage students to become problem-centered.
3. To assist in developing an awareness of the use of various skills related to leadership and participation as tools of effective performance.
4. To provide an introduction to group problem-solving procedures.

Concepts to be developed

1. Socialization within the group provides a sense of identity, a source of self-esteem and an opportunity for productive exchange.
2. Role, rule, and social participation frequently limit individuality within the group context.

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3. The social self, i.e., the reflective self, poses problems as well as potentialities for the individual. Groups provide a context for the resolution of inner conflicts.

4. Various devices and strategies may be used for effective self-control and group performance.

5. Communication in any group context is organized.

Activities

1. Understanding group processes: dramatization of roles in situations familiar to the student
   a. Students will be encouraged to recognize roles and rules (implicit and explicit) as they occur in contexts familiar to the students: playground, after school, the office, etc.
   b. Groups will be asked to provide attack, support, protection, assistance, etc., for individuals in difficult situations, i.e., teacher being observed, friend in trouble, poor report card, etc.

2. "Projects out of a Junk Box" - From a variety of topics, themes, etc., each student-teacher group will symbolize a verbal/non-verbal message for presentation.

3. Coordinating activity within the group - plans for problem solving to be used in:

   solution of "scrambled messages."
   defining project for presentation in final session.
   solving geometric problems with and without the use of verbal processes.

SESSION VI - Revealing Feelings Behind What We Say

Context

"The best vantage point for understanding behavior is from the internal frame of reference of the individual himself." (Rogers, Client-Centered Therapy)

"If the creation of an atmosphere of acceptance, understanding, and respect is the most effective basis for facilitating the learning which is called therapy, then might it not be the basis of the learning which is called education? If the outcome of this approach to therapy is a person who is not only better able to guide himself intelligently in new situations, might a similar outcome be hoped for in education?"
(Ibid)

"No psychological health is possible unless this essential core of the person is fundamentally accepted, loved and respected by others and by himself."
(Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being)

"Psychotherapy is validly classified as special education ...all genuine education is therapeutic..."
(Elton S. Carter, personnel communication)

Goals

1. To provide opportunities for the inspection of defenses and the modification of behavior in communicative exchange.
2. To encourage empathy in communicative exchange.

Concepts to be developed

1. Feelings are the most important component of communication between teacher and student.
2. Feelings frequently operate "out-of-awareness" serving to restrict communicative effectiveness.
3. Feelings frequently create "noise."
4. Defensive feelings arise when an individual confronts experiences (including people) who seem unfamiliar, threatening, or confusing.
5. Defensive feelings frequently produce ineffective behavior.
6. Formulating a self-other, other-self, self-situation orientation can help to diminish feelings of insecurity and threat.
7. Feelings are sometimes most easily expressed and understood non-verbally.
8. Messages imply personal relationships.
9. Messages always contain unstated meanings.

Activities

1. Non-verbal communication of feelings through body tension and gesture.
2. Selecting verbal messages appropriate for specified non-verbal gestures.
3. Abstracting verbal messages from communication pertaining to feelings.
4. Building images of feelings using poetic devices to attach verbal symbols to non-verbal messages.

5. Distorting communication-feeling "states" will be contrived to subvert group effectiveness.

6. Analysis of written and oral messages to determine hidden messages pertaining to feelings.

7. Sharing feelings - each member of the dyad will construct a non-verbal representation of a feeling for the other, aspects of the representation, is shape, size, color, texture, etc., will be related to the intended feeling.

SESSION VII - Role-Playing and Creative Dramatics

Context

"Learning is personal and must result from self-motivation and eventuate in self-discipline."
(Cantor, The Teaching-Learning Process)

"Knowledge must be translated by the student. He must determine what the date means to him."
(Ibid)

Goals

1. To encourage understanding in greater depth of the origin and function of the roles the students play.

2. To provide opportunity for the selection and development of new roles.

3. To encourage the student to recognize and utilize role options as he participates in various group contexts, i.e., helping, assisting, supporting others in difficulty.

4. To demonstrate the utility of role exchange as a source of empathy and enhanced contact with others.

Concepts to be developed

1. In any group situation behavior is circumscribed by roles and rules.

2. Role opportunities may be enhancing or self-limiting.

3. Awareness of role possibilities enhances participation.

Activities

1. Analysis of the roles (i.e., games) students and teachers play in various situations.

a. Roles teachers usually play when they are mad, are upset or are afraid, etc.
b. Roles students usually play when they are in trouble, afraid, or need support, etc.

2. Contexts in which role-playing will be structured: playground, homework, lunchroom, recess, physical education, principal's office.

3. Analysis of targets produced during Session I, with greater attention to the sources of role options.

4. Selection and practice in playing new roles, based on analysis of information obtained by teachers in dyad interviews.

5. Role exchange. Each dyad to develop a situation in which empathy results from exchanging of viewpoints, situations to relate to concepts of honesty, trust, concern, etc., of teachers and students for each other.

SESSION VIII - Communicating Through Sound, Sight and Touch

Context

"For effective teaching, the point of departure is where the pupil is, not where the teacher thinks he is."
(Cantor, The Teaching-Learning Process)

"The essential problem, then, is to alter the traditional approach to learning from a negative to a positive one, to help students to learn how to learn, rather than support their pattern of learning how to avoid exposing themselves for fear of being hurt and disapproved."
(Cantor, The Dynamics of Learning)

"I have emphasized the value of understanding, discipline, and hard work in the creative process. High and sustained achievement demands even more--the concentration of a life. And even this is not all. In the absence of fresh insight, devotion is powerless, and the best technique is meaningless since it can only repeat mechanically."
(Gishlin, The Creative Process)

Goals and Related Concepts

1. To provide multi-media experiences wherein the student can distinguish his personal preferences for the use of symbols in his communicating.

2. To encourage recognition of the distinctive potentialities of each media for communicating feelings, information, etc.
3. To encourage the student to employ the multi-media message in communicating his awareness of communication concepts.
4. To provide an opportunity for students and teachers to share responsibilities in producing their final projects.
5. To provide an opportunity for the integration of the concepts previously introduced and developed during the sessions.

Activities

Performance-discussion of final communication project produced by students working with teachers in sessions, IV, V, VI, and VII.

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